

As mayor, her duties include presiding over town council meetings and signing documents. But to the residents of her village, she is known as a friend to everyone and as the woman who always has a smile on her face. Mayor Geeben has seen her small community through a lot in the last 40 years, including two major hurricanes.

I am proud to recognize such a vibrant and dedicated woman. On behalf of Florida's 16th Congressional District, I would like to express my gratitude to Mayor Geeben for her many years of service to our community, and to wish her another happy 100 years.

CONGRESS MUST BALANCE THE BUDGET

(Mr. CULBERSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CULBERSON. Madam Speaker, in our personal lives, when we have our credit cards topped out, when we have a second mortgage on the home, we quit spending money. We balance our own personal budget and we focus on the essentials. And this Congress needs to do the same thing. But, unfortunately, the Obama-Clinton-Pelosi Democratic leadership of the Congress is driving America's economy right over the cliff, like Thelma and Louise, spending money and raising taxes.

The Comptroller of the United States has certified that we are in a \$54 trillion hole; that in order to pay that off, every American would have to write a check for \$175,000. This is outrageous. It is unsupportable.

We need to adopt FRANK WOLF's legislation with Mr. COOPER, making sure that Social Security is solvent, that we balance the Federal budget as rapidly as possible. Above all, this Congress has got to quit spending money on unnecessary things, focus on the bare essentials and quit raising taxes on the American people. Above all, let's not shift all of that liability that is now apparent on Wall Street, this \$1 trillion writeoff that the banks are attempting to shift on to the United States Treasury. We cannot do it. We have got to quit spending money and balance the budget.

□ 1230

ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS IN HOUSING AND SUBPRIME MORTGAGE CRISIS TOO LITTLE AND TOO LATE

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, last Friday President Bush traveled to my home county in New Jersey to encourage residents to seek free credit counseling if they faced the threat of losing their homes. And while the credit counseling is good advice, the President's actions were simply too little and too late.

For months, the President has known that the housing and subprime mortgage crisis could force more than 2 million people to lose their homes over the next 5 years. Until yesterday, the President was unwilling to address this crisis in any way. And that is nothing new. For 7 years now, the Bush administration has taken a hands-off approach to Wall Street, allowing the corporations responsible for much of this mortgage crisis to work under the radar without any government oversight or regulation. Finally, the administration recognized yesterday that the President's credit counseling advice was not going to be enough. Treasury Secretary Paulson announced a proposal that finally calls for the regulation of these financial institutes. But, again, this is too little and too late.

Madam Speaker, this House has already acted and will continue to pass legislation that will help homeowners today, and I would hope the President would support our efforts.

FISA

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, some of our Democratic leaders say they just cannot agree to give immunity to the telecommunication companies for helping after 9/11. Perhaps the reluctance comes from massive contributions from law firms suing these patriotic companies.

Back in the days immediately after 9/11, we didn't know who all was involved in the most violent attack on U.S. soil. We didn't know if another attack was coming the next day or where or who would strike next. In that context, the telecommunications companies were asked to help their country, and they responded. Just as we had men and women respond all over this country to the Nation's call to help fight the forces of evil, these companies responded by helping, and now many in the majority are letting them be shot by friendly fire. These companies heard the cry for help from our Nation and responded, yet some in this body want to hang them out to dry on a firing line as targets for some of their biggest contributors. Let's pass FISA, with immunity from friendly fire.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

GEORGIA AND UKRAINE NATO MEMBERSHIP

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 997) expressing the strong support of the House of Representatives for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to enter into a Membership Action Plan with Georgia and Ukraine, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 997

Whereas the sustained commitment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to mutual defense has made possible the democratic transformation of Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia;

Whereas NATO members can and should play a critical role in addressing the security challenges of the post-Cold War era in creating the stable environment needed for emerging democracies in Europe and Eurasia;

Whereas lasting stability and security in Europe and Eurasia require the military, economic, and political integration of emerging democracies into existing European structures;

Whereas, in an era of threats from terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, NATO is increasingly contributing to security in the face of global security challenges for the protection and interests of its member States;

Whereas the Government of Georgia and the Government of Ukraine have each expressed a desire to join the Euro-Atlantic community, and Georgia and Ukraine are working closely with NATO and its members to meet criteria for eventual NATO membership;

Whereas, at the NATO-Ukraine Commission Foreign Ministerial meeting in Vilnius in April 2005, NATO and Ukraine launched an Intensified Dialogue on membership between the Alliance and Ukraine;

Whereas, following a meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in New York on September 21, 2006, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer announced the launching of an Intensified Dialogue on membership between NATO and Georgia;

Whereas the Riga Summit Declaration, issued by the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in November 2006, reaffirms that NATO's door remains open to new members and that NATO will continue to review the process for new membership, stating "We reaffirm that the Alliance will continue with Georgia and Ukraine its Intensified Dialogues which cover the full range of political, military, financial, and security issues relating to those countries' aspirations to membership, without prejudice to any eventual Alliance decision. We reaffirm the importance of the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership, which has its 10th anniversary next year and welcome the progress that has been made in the framework of our Intensified Dialogue. We appreciate Ukraine's substantial contributions to our common security, including through participation in NATO-led operations and efforts to promote regional cooperation. We encourage Ukraine to continue to contribute to regional security. We are determined to continue to assist, through practical cooperation, in the implementation of far-reaching reform efforts, notably in the fields of national security, defense, reform of the defense-industrial sector and fighting corruption. We welcome the commencement of an Intensified